

square and sunburned, and his jaw, David said, looked like he wouldn't a went around a fight at all.

Then my son spoke. "I hain't got no way to prove to you," he says, "that I hain't the man you're lookin' for, 'cept to let you take me down to the Valley and let me show you who I am by people who knows me, and maybe even then they couldn't swear I hain't him. The truth of it is, Mister, that I'm up here a huntin' the outlaw myself, because I wanted the reward money to go to school on next winter. But my hands is a gittin' sort o' tired a holdin' this here gun towards the blue sky, and I'd be much obliged if you'd let me take 'em down."

The man with the shield on his coat steps acrost the log that lays between him and David and takes David's rifle. Then he fishes out some handcuffs and puts 'em on my son.

"Well," David says, "le's start."

"No," says the man, whose name was Elwood, "the day is too nigh gone, and you might play me some trick in the dark. We'll jest spend the night up here at my hangout, and start early in the mornin'."

DAVID told me he somehow felt from the outset that Elwood would turn out to be somebody he'd like. He said Elwood was anxious about him a fallin' over the rocks, on account o' his hands a bein' ironed, and watched him as they picked their way up along the brook until they'd passed the Cold Spring and had reached a little nook sheltered by a overhangin' ledge, which same Elwood called his hangout. Thar was a blanket a layin' on a bed of boughs, a little roll o' clothin', a fryin' pan, and some grub, David said.

"Now," says Elwood, "take a seat thar on the rocks, and stick yore legs out here."

David done it, and Elwood put another pair o' cuffs around his ankles.

Well, they had somethin' to eat, and when it got dark Elwood lit a little fire back ag'in the rock wall. David he sat thar with his hands around his knees and watched the man who had arrested him. Elwood's eyes seemed to lose their keenness and git mighty sad, David said. He'd set thar and stare at the fire and think, and think, and think. And fin'ly he seemed to forgit that he had a prisoner, and went off to sleep, Elwood did, right whar he set.

My son he worked his way acrost the few feet that separated 'em, and felt in Elwood's pocket and found the handcuff keys. He took one in his teeth and unlocked his wrist irons; and in three minutes more he had both pairs off and had put them and the keys back in Elwood's pocket, and had set right back whar he'd been a settin'. A little later Elwood fell acrost his bed of boughs and laid thar as sound asleep as he could be. David gethered up some brush and made a bed of his own, and went to sleep hisself. You see, he reasoned that him not a runnin' away would prove to Elwood that he wasn't the road agent.

The next mornin' David he woke up jest at good day-break; although it was still a mite dark in the valleys below. He set up, a wonderin' whar he was at; then he remembered, and looked around him, and seen that Elwood was not thar.

It puzzled David. He got to his feet and looked ag'in. Yit he seen no Elwood nowhar. So he set out and made his way up through the rocks and scrub to the top o' the peak, and thar he found the man he was a lookin' for.

But David didn't approach him then. He stood thar ahind of him—a watchin' him. He seen him stand thar on the highest p'int o' that great pinnacle, and stretch his arms out towards the dim valleys below, and he heerd him say this, in a voice that seemed all broke and shattered:

"Irene! Irene! Irene!"

And then he seen Elwood shake his head and cover his face with his hands, with his elbows clost together on his breast, and git down on his knees. But David couldn't quite make out to hear what it was he said. And he didn't want to hear it: he felt like he was intrudin'. He said he thought o' the place in the Book whar Moses took off his shoes. He slipped back to the shelter under the hangin' ledge, whar he set down and waited for Elwood to come back.

IT wasn't very long until Elwood come back. David noticed that his eyes was absent lookin' and like them of somebody who has suffered a heap inside of him with a misery that has been a hold of him for a long time. It shore looked strange to see a man as big and stout lookin' as Elwood actin' that a-way.

Then Elwood seen that David's irons was gone, and it seemed to sort o' wake him up. "When did you git loose?" he axes.

"Last night while you was asleep," answers my son. "I got the keys out o' yore pocket and unlocked myself."

"Full o' tricks, ain't you?" says Elwood. "But of course a road agent who could pull off so many stunts as you done is bound to be full o' tricks. If you'd a got loose last night, you wouldn't be here today. Honest, when did you git loose?"

"Feel in yore coat pocket," says David, "and you'll find the cuffs right whar I put 'em."

Elwood felt and found them and the keys. For a minute he stood thar a gazin' at David, surprised that he hadn't noticed the weight o' the irons; then he spoke. "I don't think you're the outlaw, after all," he says. "If you'd a been him, you'd a run away. Will you pardon me for placin' you under arrest?"

They shook hands, and David said he never seen anybody who knowed how to shake any better'n Elwood did.

"David," says Elwood, "I'll make you this proposition: We'll stay up here together and watch for the bandit;



"I'm Going to Tell You About the Treasure I Found Up Here."

and when we catch him you shall have the reward money. I don't need it: I've found somethin' up here that is so valuable that three hundred little old dollars hain't nothin' aside of it. My reason for wantin' you," he goes on, "is that I'm mighty lonesome."

"Much obliged," says David. "I'll take you up, and I'll never forgit you for doin' it."

David wondered what Elwood had found that was so valuable; but he decided if Elwood had a wanted him to know what it was he'd a told him, so he didn't ax. But he had a' idee it was gold, because gold had been found in thar a few years afore by a party of hunters.

"I reckon you're a big officer," says David, a wantin' to say somethin', as the silence was a gittin' heavy, "and money hain't so much to you."

"Well," smiles Elwood, "while I've been fairly successful, I've not quite got to the p'int of advisin' people to save my autographs; and I don't take many baths in champagne."

THE day passed off without nothin' happenin' 'cept that my son and Elwood spent a good deal o' the time a slippin' around on the sides o' the peak and a watchin' below 'em. You understand, a man high up on a mountain can see people away below when them below can't see him to save their lives. Elwood and David got to be mighty good friends that day. David hadn't never been nowhar much, and Elwood told him about the wonderful things in the big cities, and about the big ships of the sea, and about so many, many things. I tell you it shore was a treat to David, with his inquirin' mind!

That evenin' about sundown David missed Elwood suddenly. He took up his rifle, and went out to look for him; because he wanted to be around if the outlaw come, so's he could earn his money. He found Elwood a standin' on top o' the peak, with his arms folded acrost his breast, a watchin' somethin' to the west'ard. He said Elwood was a standin' as still as a tree, with the wind a playin' at his hair and a flappin' at the corners of his coat like hands that you couldn't see. David goes up to him from ahind of him, and takes him light by the shoulder. Elwood looks around.

"I was a watchin' the old sun sink out o' sight," says he, with a smile that was mighty good. "Hain't it fine from here, David, my friend? And jest think, David, how many things that old sun thar has seen,—how

much joy and tragedy, how many Empires rise and fall, how many births of the children of men, how much human pride cut down by death! Ah, David, it gits a feller, don't it, a sunset from here?"

David looks Elwood right in the eyes. "I always liked to see a sunset," says my son; "but I didn't think it was so much for a big, grown man to brag about, this here wantin' to watch the sun set: a seemin' like," he adds sort o' bashful, "that it was more for the womenfolks."

Elwood straightens up afore David like he'd been struck with a hard fist. "In the name o' Heaven, Man," he says, "hain't we got as much right to think of beautiful things as women has?" And he 'peared to git all worked up in a passion. "Man," he goes on, "I wish you could feel as I feel when I stand here on the top o' this mountain. It—it gits into the heart o' me when I look away yander at the sun, with jest a little of it above the skyline, and all 'tended with a glory of colors that must be like the glory of God. And that ain't all. Look down thar, David, at them little mountains, a lyin' like nothin' but ridges, like footstools for this great peak here! Look, David, my friend, at the dark shadders a getherin' in the valleys, and at the little streams a lyin' like streaks o' dull silver so far below us! Cain't you feel the breath of somethin' holy up here? Cain't you feel that you're away above the common walks of us puny clayworms that goes by the name o' men? Don't you feel like you're higher'n you ever was afore in all yore life—and in more ways 'n one?"

"I've felt all o' that," says David, with his voice jest a throbbin'. "I couldn't a told it, though, if it had a been to save my life. I've been to this here peak several times jest to git to feel like you said. I've stood here for hours, and looked and thought, and looked and thought. I tell you, Mr. Elwood, I'm glad I knowed you! If I never do git to see you ag'in after this here little bust after the road agent, even then I'll never be quite as lonesome as I was afore. Lonesome? I love them hills down thar; but sometimes they gits me by the throat and durn nigh smothers me!"

Elwood looked at my son for a full minute without a word. Then he says to David, "You've got a King's soul in you," he says; "and tomorrow I'm a goin' to tell you about the treasure I found up here—which is one o'

Continued on page 16